



City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Department of Transportation

Goran Sparrman, Interim Director

Seattle Parking Sounding Board Notes

Date/Time: April 24, 2014, 2:00 – 3:30 PM

Location: Seattle Municipal Tower Room 3832

Members Present: Doug Campbell (University District Business Improvement Area), Jim Erickson (First Hill Business Improvement Association), Nick Hawley (Downtown Seattle Association), Mike Stewart (Ballard Chamber of Commerce), Susan Ranf (Mariners), Liz Stenning (Alliance for Pioneer Square), Ken Wong (Green Lake Chamber of Commerce), David Yeaworth (Alliance for Pioneer Square), Brian Zaugg (Belltown Business Association)

Staff Present: Becky Edmonds, Mike Estey, Ruth Harper, Bill LaBorde, Mary Rutherford, Mary Catherine Snyder, Jonathan Williams (All SDOT); Christie Parker (City Budget Office); Lish Whitson (Council Central Staff); Carrie Jones, Mary Mitchell (SPD)

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Presentation

Mary Catherine Snyder presented.

- a. Review of data-driven policy since 2010: The Seattle Municipal Code policy adopted by City Council is to keep 1 to 2 spaces open per blockface throughout the day. SDOT collects data in all paid areas annually. SDOT has adjusted rates and time limits to meet City policy. In the future, we expect this to be an annual process.
- b. 2014 Adjustments Summary: Neighborhood rates will be adjusted throughout the city. Neighborhoods fall into these categories:
 - Areas which will have different rates by time of day (with new pay stations installed)
 - Areas which will have new all-day rates (no new pay stations)
 - Areas where evening paid parking will be put in place
 - Areas with no changes

These proposed changes are tentative, because we are currently in the process of collecting 2014 data, which we also plan to use to inform final rate decisions before we begin making changes in late summer. The list may change if there are any schedule changes to the pay station replacement project.

Q: Do you capture disabled permit use in your data collection?

A: Yes, as part of our annual parking study we count the number of vehicles on each blockface including whether there is a disabled parking permit present. We also capture RPZ permitted vehicles in areas with RPZ parking, and this year we will be counting car2go vehicles parked on each block.

Q: To clarify, is it correct that there may be changes to the currently proposed rate changes?

A: Yes. We will plan to have another Sounding Board meeting in June or July to finalize rate change proposals. This schedule is also dependent on the schedule for installation of new pay stations.

- c. Time of Day Rates: In areas with new equipment, SDOT will set rates based on time of day, in three time bands: 8 AM – 11 AM, 11 AM – 5 PM (where there is evening paid parking) or 6 PM (where there is not evening paid parking), and 5 PM – 8 PM (areas with evening paid parking only). Areas proposed for time-of-day rates in 2014 are:

Area	Current Rate	2013 data (target range 70-85%)	Proposal
Chinatown/ID Core	Day: \$2.50/ hour; Evening: \$1.50/ hour	Morning occupancy = 36%; Below target	Lower morning to \$2.00/ hour
Chinatown/ID Periphery	\$2.00/ hour	Morning occupancy = 39%; Below target	Lower morning to \$1.50/ hour
Commercial Core Retail	\$4.00/ hour	Morning occupancy = 61%; Below target	Lower morning to \$3.50/ hour
Commercial Core Waterfront	\$4.00/ hour	Morning occupancy = 48%; Below target	Lower morning to \$3.50/ hour
Pike-Pine	\$2.00/ hour	Morning occupancy = 47%; Below target Evening occupancy = 97%; Above target	Lower morning to \$1.50/ hour Raise evening to \$2.50/ hour
Pioneer Square Core	\$3.50/ hour	Morning occupancy = 64%; Below target Afternoon occupancy = 95%; Above target	Lower morning to \$3.00/ hour Raise afternoon to \$4.00/ hour
Pioneer Square Periphery	\$3.00/ hour	Morning occupancy = 64%; Below target	Lower morning to \$2.50/ hour

- d. New All-Day Rates: In several areas not slated for new equipment in 2014, SDOT will still be making all-day rate adjustments. These areas are:

Area	Current Rate	2013 data (target range 70-85%)	Proposal
Ballard Periphery	\$1.50/ hour	Occupancy = 58%; Below target	Lower to \$1.00/ hour
Ballard Locks	\$1.50/ hour	Large seasonal occupancy differences	Adjust seasonally: \$2.00/ hour: May – Sept. \$1.00/ hour: Oct. – April
Belltown North	\$2.00/ hour	Occupancy = 52%; Below target	Lower to \$1.50/ hour

South Lake Union 10-hour	\$1.50/ hour	Occupancy = 95%; Above target	Raise to \$2.00/ hour
University District Periphery	\$1.50/ hour	Occupancy = 56%; Below target	Lower to \$1.00/ hour

- e. New Evening Hours: In several areas, evening occupancy (as measured at 7:00 PM) is very high, and SDOT plans to implement paid parking until 8:00 PM. These areas are:

Area	Proposal 8 am – 8 pm and 3 hours After 5	2013 Annual Parking Study 7 p.m. occupancy
12 th Avenue	\$1.50/ hour	108%
Ballard Core	\$2.00/ hour	103%
Ballard Periphery	\$1.00 / hour*	99%
Fremont	\$1.50/ hour	98%
Green Lake	\$1.00 / hour	110%

Q: Is parking demand elastic? That is, how much do people respond to price changes, particularly by time of day?

A: SDOT has used a variety of parking management tools, including both price and time limit changes, to impact demand. Part of the motivation for charging less in the morning is that we want to charge the lowest rate possible to move towards the target range. In many areas, morning demand does not merit having as high a rate as in the afternoon and evening. However, we are not anticipating everyone shifts to parking earlier in the day. For example, we don't expect people to shift their lunch time to 9 am, and factors such as new developments and businesses also help drive parking demand.

Q: Have you considered eliminating 10-hour parking?

A: For a bit of background, both 10-hour and 2-hour paid parking were installed in South Lake Union in previously unregulated areas. At the time, this made a lot of sense; the neighborhood needed parking management but the land uses were not entirely consistent with short-term use. As land use changes, with more retail and other short-term uses added, SDOT will likely shift blocks from 10-hour to 2-hour parking. Because the 10-hour parking area is overly full and above target, SDOT will be increasing the rate from \$1.50/hour to \$2.00/hour.

Q: How is it possible to achieve over 100%?

A: SDOT has a database that includes capacity for each blockface, but does not demarcate spaces on the street. This means that often some extra vehicles can squeeze in. Occupancy over 100% may also suggest illegal parking is occurring (too close to driveways, stop signs, etc.)

Q: Does that mean that “70%” is really actually more like 60% full?

A: First, it is important for SDOT to maintain consistent records about the capacity of blocks, so that year-to-year data is comparable. Secondly, this discrepancy is why we have a target

range, not just one number; we are aiming to have the user's experience be that they can usually find a space. Once it gets very full, that gets more difficult.

Q: Would it make sense to put in time limits, for example, in unrestricted areas just outside of paid areas, to help balance demand?

A: As part of the 2014 study, SDOT is studying parking occupancy on streets adjacent to paid areas to get a better sense of what happens there.

Q: Will rate changes be coordinated with ongoing parking planning work (for example, in Ballard)?

A: Yes, it is our priority to make sure that changes are rolled out in a way that makes sense to people. Ongoing community engagement work in Ballard will continue and will coordinate with the rollout of evening paid parking there.

Q: Does reducing the time limit help to lessen parking congestion? Does parking management help reduce traffic congestion?

A: Since the start of the Performance Based Pricing Program, for the most part, SDOT has extended the time limits (from 2 to 4 hours in a few places). We found that parking occupancy increased in those areas, including moving some from below the target range to within the target range. In general, managing on-street parking effectively should reduce traffic congestion as people are able to park quickly and get out of traffic.

Q: Are there cases where expanding paid parking does not pay for itself from a revenue perspective?

A: This varies by area, but our experience has been that pay stations pay for themselves within a few years.

Q: Is there a relationship between these paid parking neighborhood designations and zoning?

A: The neighborhoods as defined for parking management do align with citywide neighborhood designations. When we look to split neighborhoods into core and periphery, if necessary, we look at common land uses as well as parking demand concentration.

Q: In neighborhoods like Pioneer Square, occupancy is high but this seems to be related to the loss of supply due to construction of the streetcar and on Alaskan Way. How does SDOT deal with that?

A: SDOT does look at overall occupancy and sets rates based on how full they are, so we are managing for actual conditions. In Pioneer Square, we are making other investments, such as incentivizing low rates in garages and using ePark wayfinding to help people find parking faster.

Q: What is the data collection process?

A: SDOT hires a consultant because the work involved is beyond what can be handled with in-house staff. Over 9,000 stalls are being counted this year – about 3/4 of the total paid parking supply. Consultant staff count vehicles systematically, hourly in all areas from 8 am to at least 9 pm, although later into the evening in areas with nightlife attractions. In some areas, they count a significant sample area, while in others they count every blockface of paid parking. We also get counts on event days (such as sports events) and on some Sundays in some areas. Counts are completed on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, as is industry standard for traffic and parking studies. The study is completed in April and May, which are typical months for on-street paid parking (i.e. not during periods of peak demand, such as the holidays or the summer).

Q: Do you count disabled placards as part of the parking study?

A: Yes. We are aware that parking by vehicles with disabled permits is a significant issue in several neighborhoods. We have been working on some improvements that should improve the situation. There was a work group at the Department of Licensing to tighten DOL's issuance and to strengthen enforcement. Many of the workgroup's recommendations were adopted by the legislature and were signed into law by Governor Jay Inslee on March 28, 2014. Text of the law is [here](#).

Q: Would there ever be time limits for cars parked with disabled permits?

A: At this time, the City does have statutory authority to make this change, but has had feedback from the Commission for People with disAbilities that time limits would impose an undue hardship on those using their disabled parking permits legitimately. Therefore, at this time our focus has been to work to tighten the supply of permits and enforce improper use.

- f. Public education tools: A major purpose of the Parking Sounding Board is to get feedback from the board about what appropriate public education tools could help the public understand what changes are coming. Ideas included:
- Opportunities for businesses to validate customers' parking
 - "Stuffers" in ticket orders from Ticketmaster
 - Media attention
 - Temporary signage to alert customers about coming changes
 - Making this a regular, annual rate change program would help people learn to expect it
 - Sometimes people just need to learn over time
 - Mary Catherine is happy to attend community groups, chamber meetings, etc.

3. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:20 PM.